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stories illustrate the thought "of an overruling, yet immanent, divine Providence, realizing its purpose through the complex interaction of human motives, working out a result which no single actor contemplated" (p. 440).

On the other hand there is an honest dealing with the narratives as they are without reading into them spiritual meaning, which the author does not believe they legitimately contain. Dr. Skinner's position in this regard may be seen in the following instances. Of 3:15 he states, "it is doubtful if, from the standpoint of strict historical exegesis, the passage can be regarded as in any sense a *Protevangelium*" (p. 81). The offering of Isaac (chap. xxii) he thinks originally belonged to "the class of aetiological legends which everywhere weave themselves round peculiarities of ritual whose real origin has been forgotten or obscured" (p. 332). "No more boldly anthropomorphic narrative is found in Genesis" than that of Jacob wrestling with the Angel (32:22-32); "and unless we shut our eyes to some of its salient features, we must resign the attempt to translate it wholly into terms of religious experience. We have to do with a legend, originating at a low level of religion, in process of accommodation to the purer ideas of revealed religion" (p. 411).

On the interpretation of such passages as these, many who class themselves in the modern school will doubtless disagree with his views, preferring to follow more cautious and conservative conclusions, such as are given by Doctors Bennett and Driver. But whether one agrees or differs from Dr. Skinner on these or other points of interpretation, there can be no question that his conclusions are presented only after a careful examination of different claimant views, and with a marked freedom from the dogmatic spirit. Students of the Old Testament have been placed under a debt of deep and lasting obligation to Dr. Skinner, which can be fully appreciated only by a careful examination of the book itself.

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### THE SAMARITAN LITURGY

Mr. Cowley has at last given the learned world the most important desideratum in Samaritan literature—a properly edited text of that mass of hymns and midrashic material current in the Samaritan Com-

munity which may be entitled its liturgy.<sup>1</sup> There is a perennial interest in Samaritana, as was recently instanced by the brief sensation over Dr. Gaster's publication of a Samaritan text of the biblical Joshua. There still remains much to be done in the way of careful editing of Samaritan texts; Von Gall is planning a variorum edition of the Samaritan Hebrew Pentateuch, which would seem to be a pressing need in view of the extent to which the Samaritan codex is now adduced by textual critics. In England Dr. Ginsburg has announced a like purpose. Those remarkable monuments of the early Samaritan dialect, the Aramaic Targums, also still present problems which have by no means been solved; the text of the Barberini Triglot has never been fully edited, and what has appeared has been insufficiently done. But withal the liturgy is the material which has most demanded critical attention, for it must be the chief mine for the exploration of the history of the Samaritan theology. It is the liturgy which has preserved for us the antique forms of primitive Samaritan messianism and other eschatological doctrines; as the product of the free religious spirit it is peculiarly independent of the crushing load of political oppression, and these songs of Mount Gerizim vindicate the spirituality of the wretched sect; also the liturgy appears to be less under the influence of rabbinism and Islam than most of the theological products of the Samaritans. Indeed, to the present writer's mind and experience it is the only department of that literature where the student of religion can move with any feeling of delight and interest. In this it is like the Hebrew Psalter. Like the Psalms so the Samaritan hymns are used at specific festivals and on the religious occasions of the private life, and are peculiarly the expression of the common religion of the people. They throw no light upon sacrificial cult; with the Samaritan as with the Jew psalmody and oral liturgy have replaced sacrifice.

Mr. Cowley has given us a monument of patient and devoted scholarship. He began the work in 1890, some early sheets were even printed in 1892; but it took him nearly twenty years to complete his task. His material was distributed throughout Europe, in London, Oxford, Manchester, Gotha, Paris, Rome, and he appears to have collated in whole or in part over seventy MSS. "The texts," he says, "are mostly edited for the first time." How extensive this material is, is shown by the Index of First Lines, which lists about 900 pieces, covering almost the same number of pages in fine Hebrew type compactly printed.

<sup>1</sup> *The Samaritan Liturgy*, edited by A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1909. 2 vols. c+879 pages. £3 3s. net.

The most extensive editor before Cowley was Heidenheim, who published about 140 hymns or portions of hymns. But unlike Heidenheim's edition the present text is critical, with a good apparatus of variant readings. Also the Arabic rubrics are fully given, and the diacritical marks used by the Samaritan scribes are preserved in the text. It may be remarked that the text is given in the Hebrew square character; a wise provision facilitating the use of the material, while in matter of fact the cast types of the Samaritan alphabet do not at all accurately represent Samaritan as it is written.

In a modest Introduction, only too brief, Cowley gives some interesting results of his investigations. Throughout his work he has been concerned in dating these compositions; as most of them have the author's name attached, a chronological clue appears to be given. But the annalistic material for identification is slight and unreliable, and the editor has gone to a self-sacrificing extent in his attempt to identify the author and age of each composition. This chronological study (pp. xviii ff.) is most valuable; it terminates in genealogical tables of the chief literary families, and a table of the succession of the high priests from the fourth to the seventeenth centuries, the period of literary activity.

There follows in the Introduction (p. xxxv) a brief account of the peculiarities of the Samaritan language in form and script as it appears in the hymns. There is an interesting account of the vowel-signs used in the texts, which appear to have escaped the notice of earlier scholars; Heidenheim repeated them in his texts without any explanation of them. The Arabic system of three vowel signs is used; the first and the third of the Arabic signs are borrowed, but a peculiar sign has been invented for the *e*-class vowel. These signs are used to indicate the existence of vowels, for the purpose of meter and interpretation, and to distinguish between variously vocalized words. There follows a brief account of grammatical peculiarities (p. xxxvii), and of great use to the student who may wish to sample this fresh material is the Glossary which the editor gives (p. xlix). There is no one living who would be so competent to translate and interpret this mass of literature as Mr. Cowley, and we wish it were in the scope of his purpose to continue his work in these lines. But he may think that he has done his duty by a crabbed literature.

The first portion of the edited texts is the so-called Defter, or Common Prayers, the eldest part of the liturgy, going back in part to the theologian Marqah in the fourth century. There follow the series for Passover,

Pentecost, the Seventh Month; then the occasional offices, for Marriage and Circumcision and for Burial. With the exception of a few extracts in Heidenheim these occasional offices are published for the first time.

The reviewer has looked up several hymns given in Heidenheim's and Gesenius' texts and has found them all in Cowley's edition. He judges, therefore, that this new work includes substantially the elder material and at the same time manifold more that has not been published. In the brief comparisons he has been able to make, the earlier editors do not appear to have been as much amiss in their readings as he had supposed. The hymns are full of difficulties which the textual transmission has only exaggerated. It might have been useful if Cowley had indicated those hymns published by him which have been edited elsewhere, so that the student who is not *au fait* with the whole of the literature might turn to the older commentaries.

Mr. Cowley has performed a most painstaking task for which great gratitude is due him. By presenting a definitive text of the liturgy he has tremendously eased the labors of those who are interested in Samaritan subjects and gives them the means for further research.

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### VIOLET'S EDITION OF IV EZRA

The eighteenth volume of the series called "The Greek-Christian Authors of the First Three Centuries" (Die griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte) places IV Ezra in the category of Greek productions and of Christian origin.<sup>1</sup> In its present form the so-called Ezra-Apocalypse is certainly Jewish-Christian in its contents, with the Jewish element largely preponderating; but the work exists only in Latin manuscripts and in others for the most part surely derived from Latin. It is the firm conviction of Dr. Violet, as of most other authorities on the subject, that the Fourth Book of Ezra must have existed in Greek, from which it was rendered into Latin and possibly into other tongues.

<sup>1</sup> *Die Esra-Apokalyptse* (IV Esra). Erster Teil, Die Ueberlieferung, herausgegeben im Auftrage der Kirchenväter Commission der Königl. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, von LIC. DR. BRUNO VIOLET, Pfarrer an der Thaborkirche in Berlin. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1910. lxiv+446 pages. M. 17.50.